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CASH INSTEAD OF FOOD STAMPS FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED PEOPLE



The Food Stamp Program is testing a new way to give food stamp benefits to elderly people and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. Under this project, certain households will get a check instead of food stamps.

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Food and Nutrition Service
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The Food Stamp Program is testing a new way to give food stamp benefits to elderly people and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. Under this project, certain households will get a check instead of food stamps.

Who Can Get a Food Stamp Check?

If you are eligible for food stamps, you may qualify to receive a food stamp check if:

- you are 65 years or older and live alone, or
- you get SSI benefits and live alone, or
- all the people in your household either get SSI benefits or are 65 years of age or older.

Households that qualify for a food stamp check have to meet the same Food Stamp Program rules as households that get food stamps. The basic eligibility rules include the following requirements:

Citizenship: Only household members who are U.S. citizens or legally permanent aliens may qualify.

Resources: Resources include money, property, and vehicles. All households may

have up to \$1,750 worth of resources. Households of two or more people may have up to \$3,000, if at least one person is 60 or older. Certain resources are counted towards these limits and others are not. For example, your home and surrounding property and the contents of your home are not counted. Cash, savings, and checking accounts are counted.

Income: Money you earn by working or payments you receive on a regular basis are counted as income. Food stamp income limits go up as household size increases. The food stamp office will add up your household's monthly income and will subtract deductions covering certain expenses to see if your household's income is below what is allowed for your household's size.

Food stamp rules are the same for all without regard to age, race, sex, color, handicap, national origin, or political belief.

How to Apply for a Food Stamp Check

If you are 65 years old or over or get SSI benefits, and think you qualify for a food stamp check, you must file an application and be interviewed by your local welfare office. You can pick up an application at the office, fill it out, and turn it in the same day. Or you may ask for one over the phone and the office will mail it to you on the same day.

Turn your application in as soon as you can, because if you qualify, you will get a check within 30 days of the day the office got your application. If your household has little or no money and needs help right away, tell the office, because you may be able to get benefits within a few days.

What If You Can't Get to the Office?

If you cannot get to the office, someone who knows your circumstances can apply and be interviewed for you. If you cannot find someone to go for you, call the welfare office. You may qualify for an interview in your home or over the phone.

What Information will the Office Need?

The office will need proof of all income, such as pay stubs or employer's phone number; benefit letters from Social Security, Veterans Administration, unemployment compensation, or SSI; and pension information. The office may also need statements of your checking and savings accounts and your bills for rent or mort-

gage, utilities, insurance on your house, child care, care for a dependent adult, and medical expenses. If possible, bring your most recent information.

If You Qualify

The value of the food stamp check you get will be based on your household's size and income after deductions. Receiving a food stamp check will not reduce the amount of other payments you receive, such as Social Security.

If you think you qualify for a food stamp check or you have any questions, call, write, or visit your local welfare or food stamp office or call the Food Stamp HOTLINE. The HOTLINE number is _____

If you believe that you or any group of individuals have been discriminated against by the Food Stamp Program because of age, sex, color, race, handicap, religious creed, national origin, or political beliefs, write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

